

Hanford Openness Workshops *Fact Sheet*

Document Review

Hanford Openness Workshops

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*The Hanford Openness
Workshops are a
collaborative effort
among the U.S.
Department of Energy-
Richland Operations
Office, the Consortium
for Risk Evaluation
with Stakeholder
Participation, the
Oregon Office of
Energy, the Washington
Department of Ecology,
and regional Tribal
and citizen
representatives.*

HOW Declassification Working Group

It is the mission of the Hanford Openness Workshops (HOW) to resolve issues impeding the availability of information important to public health, the environment, understanding and decision making at the US Department of Energy's (DOE) Hanford nuclear site in southeastern Washington state. This fact sheet outlines the HOW's recommendations on declassification.

32,000,000 Pages

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has about 32 million pages of classified information, and the agency estimates that between three and four million pages exist at Hanford. The list of classified document *titles* alone fills more than a one cubic-foot box. In addition to problems raised by the sheer volume, determining the contents of a document by title is difficult. Results of previous title reviews confirm that document titles do not necessarily strictly relate to or reveal the document's contents.

New ways to allow public access to this information can and should be found. Intelligent computer systems should be able to reduce the workload significantly. This capability will only improve with time. Hanford Openness Workshop participants took a global look at document declassification and how to prioritize declassification efforts and recommend:

Declassification Recommendations

- DOE should make declassification a normal part of doing business.
- Contract performance and award fees should be based in part on contractor performance in ensuring the appropriate maintenance of records and public and regulator access to these records.
- DOE must budget for the maintenance and declassification of records and documents and give this activity high priority.
- Preservation and timely release of these records, without revealing secrets that may reasonably endanger the national security, is essential to protect worker health and safety, public health and safety, and the environment.
- To aid future declassification, DOE should develop policies and systems that would allow for easier declassification of records and documents in the future.
- The latest technology should be applied to aid declassification and release of documents declassified and other documents to interested parties.
- Declassification should be streamlined.
- DOE, with input from stakeholders, should develop and employ a system for prioritization that will identify the types of material typically found in classes or types of documents.
- DOE should aggressively examine and incorporate technology that will aid in the identification and assessment of information to allow better prioritization.

Declassification of all Hanford documents will be a long process. On-going involvement of stakeholders is needed to:

- Develop and maintain dialogue to incorporate tribal values into declassification efforts.
- Build mutual trust on openness issues.
- Identify and clarify priorities for declassification of documents or groups of documents.
- Aid in reviewing documents, declassified and unclassified, to determine relevance to stakeholder and cleanup needs.
- Aid in identifying historically-important information and documents for preservation.
- Provide on-going support to ensure that openness is a long-term commitment between USDOE and stakeholders.
- Help resolve problems identified by DOE during declassification efforts.
- Support continued funding of openness and declassification.
- Annually review and report on USDOE/Contractor performance on Openness.

For more information, see the *Hanford Openness Workshops 1998 Report*, available via the HOW address and phone or electronically at the HOW web site.